THE WHITE HORSES OF THE WEST OF ENGLAND.

Nika from G. & B.
(This includes your White Horse)

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THE WHITE HORSES

OF THE

WEST OF ENGLAND.

WITH NOTICES OF SOME OTHER ANCIENT TURF-MONUMENTS.

SECOND EDITION, REVISED AND ENLARGED.

BY THE

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PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION.

These pages were first laid before the public in 1885. The original edition having sold out in about five months, the writer was urged to publish a second edition, but was for a long time unwilling, for various reasons, so to do. But the demand for a reprint has been so persistent that he has at last consented to accede to the request. He has taken the opportunity of revising the booklet throughout, and has added a few sketches of some typical forms of the American Animal Mounds, to which the attention of Archæologists has been a good deal directed of late years, and which he thinks will be interesting, if only for the analogy which they bear to the turf-monuments of our own country.

Mamhead Rectory, Devon,
February, 1892.

ON THE WHITE HORSES

OF THE

WEST OF ENGLAND.

With Notices of some other Ancient Turf-Monuments.

THERE are few travellers by any of the Western high roads who would not have seen and noticed one or other of those great figures of horses cut out in the chalky hills which form such conspicuous landmarks for a distance of ten miles or more. Nor does the sight generally fail to cause in the minds of such persons a desire to learn something of the origin and history of these singular memorials of a past age. It is this desire which the following pages are intended in some degree to gratify.

We must commence first of all by remarking upon the employment of animal forms from the very earliest ages as the badge or symbol of nations. The seals of the Phocæans, the tortoises of the Æginetans, and the beetles of the Egyptians, all date from several

centuries before the Christian era, and seem to have been persistently retained during very long periods of time. To which we may add the Horse itself as a well-known Thracian type, appearing upon the coins of that country for at least four centuries before this period. The horse was also the emblem of Carthage, Abdera, Pharsalus, Amphilochium, Argos, Corinth, &c., &c.

Not only this, but horses themselves appear to have been from very early days the objects of religious regard. Cyrus is reported by Herodotus (B. I., § 189) to have ordered that the river Gyndes should be punished for its having drowned one of his "sacred horses"; and we hear again, in the same history, (B. VII., § 55) of "sacred horses" as passing over the Hellespont immediately before Xerxes himself. Some five centuries later, Tacitus tells us in his treatise, *De Moribus Germanorum* (§ 10), "These people have certain horses, which are kept in their sacred groves, untouched and free from any sort of mortal labour (*candidi et nullo mortali opere contacti*); and when they are harnessed to the sacred chariot, the priest and the king, or the chief man of the city, go with them and observe their neighings and whinnyings. Nor is there any sort of augury to which more importance is attached—both in the minds of the people and also in that of the nobles and priests—for they imagine themselves to be the servants, but the others the favourites of the gods (*se enim ministros deorum, illos conscios putant*)."

This national characteristic seems to have been long-enduring, for Camden in his *Britannia* (Holland's

Trans., p. 135, a.) says, "Moreover this nation of the Saxons was very much addicted to superstition, and for that cause when they were to consult of weighty and important matters, besides soothsaying by inspection of beasts' entrails, they observed especially the neighing of horses as presaging things to come. And thence perhaps it is that the Dukes of Saxonie in ancient times gave the horse in their Armes. But why our first progenitours, Hengistus and Horsa, tooke their names of an horse (for both their names in the Saxon tongue do signifie an *horse*) surely I know not, unless it were for a lucky osse and foretoken of their warlicke prowesse, according to that verse of Virgil—

> 'For warre our horses armed are,
> These beasts also doe threaten warre." *

In Grimm's *Deutsche Mythologie* (p. 626, Ed. 1844) it is said that the worship of the horse was common to the Celtic and Germanic as well as to the Sclavonic tribes; and in the *Saga* of Olaf Trygvesson it is reported that Olaf, hearing of the inhabitants of Drontheim having relapsed into the worship of Freyr, sailed himself with an expedition and destroyed their temple. "And when he landed," adds the chronicler, "he found the sacred horses of the god feeding in the precincts of the temple." And in connection with this part of the subject may be mentioned a coin of the Belindi, on which appears a very singular representation of a horse standing within a distyle temple. This is

* "*Bello armantur equi: bellum hæc armenta minantur,*" —Æneid, III., 540.

supposed by De Lagoy to have been a type of the goddess Epona, (see *Apuleius*, Metamorph. III.)—which may or may not be the case.

S. Bede the Venerable also mentions the reverence shown by our ancestors to the horse, and it is by some writers thought probable that when Caligula spoke of raising his horse to the consulship it was not a mere freak of imperial caprice, but was with the idea of a compliment to the superstition of his Gallic and British subjects.

Amongst the Scandinavian nations, not only was the horse an object of religious reverence, but the sacrifice of horses appears to have been one of their sacred rites. In a curious book of Keysler's, entitled *Antiquitates Septentrionales et Celticæ*, is a quotation from the works of Dithmar, Bishop of Merseburg, a historian of the eleventh century, in which the latter says of the Danes, "There is a place in these parts, the capital of the country, called Lethra, in the district of Selon, where the whole people are accustomed to come together, and there to sacrifice to their gods ninety-nine men, and as many horses, together with dogs and cocks." And in the sixth century Agathius says "The Alemanni are accustomed to appease the deities of certain trees, sacrificing to them horses and many other victims with their heads thrown back."

After the sacrifices followed a feast upon the flesh of the victims, called "Blotfagnat," of which we have some very curious details in the *Saga* of Haco, cap. 18. "On the feast day, as soon as they had sat down to the tables, the country folks came to the king and

prayed him to taste the horse-flesh. And when he would on no account consent to this, they entreated him to drink some of the gravy; which, when he equally refused, they assure him that the fat would be far from disagreeable. At last Sigard makes petition that he will at least bend down towards the cauldron and touch the handle of it with the tip of his lips. Accordingly the king rose up and, having first covered the handle with linen, applied the extremity of his lips to the cauldron. Then taking his place again upon the royal seat he is hailed by all as having clearly done that which was well-pleasing to the people." Haco was at this time a Christian king, though he is said afterwards to have relapsed into idolatry, and what was "well-pleasing" to his heathen subjects was very far from being so to the ecclesiastical authorities of the day. And we accordingly find that the eating of horse-flesh was prohibited under the severest penalties by several Popes. Gregory III. (A.D. 737), in his Epistle to Boniface, the Apostle of Germany, says, "You have mentioned to me, among other things, that some persons eat the flesh of the wild horse, and most persons that of the domesticated one. This, very holy brother, you must on no account allow for the future, but restrain in every possible way, and impose a suitable penance upon the offenders; for it is an unclean and execrable thing to do." The next Pope, Zachary, goes farther still, and pronounces that "even beavers and hares, much more wild horses, are to be avoided (for food)."

Perhaps it may not be altogether foreign to our

subject, considering the extensive connexion of the great Indo-Germanic nation, to refer in passing to the Aswamedha, or sacrifice of a horse, enjoined by the rites of the Hindu faith, and to the reverence paid to the consecrated animal previous to the consummation of the sacrifice. The description given by Southey, in his *Curse of Kehama*, singularly reminds us of some of the very phraseology of Tacitus in the passage given above :—

"Along the mead the hallowed steed
Still wanders whereso'er he will
O'er hill or dale, or plain;
No human hand hath tricked that mane
From which he shakes the morning dew;
His mouth has never felt the rein,
His lips have never frothed the chain;
For pure of blemish and of stain,
His neck unbroke to mortal yoke,
Like Nature free the steed must be,
Fit offering to the Immortals he.
A year and a day the steed must stray
Wherever chance may guide his way,
Before he fall at Seeva's shrine.
The year and day have passed away,
Nor touch of man has marred the rite divine."
—§ VIII.

To this really magnificent piece of poetry, the writer drily appends the following note : "Compare with this the account of the Bengal horses in the very amusing work of Captain Williamson—'Which said horses have Roman noses, narrow foreheads, white eyes, ugly ears, square heads, thin necks, narrow chests, shallow girths, lank bellies, cat hams, goose flanks, and switch tails!'"

Let us hope that no one will be unkind enough to apply this description to any of our White Horses; although, indeed, beauty does not seem to have been one of the characteristics by which the fabled horses of our ancestors were distinguished. For in an old poem of the sixth century, called *The Talisman of Cunobeline*, the name of the sacred horse is "Trycethin," and "Cethin" means "the hideous one!"

Leaving, however, now, this introductory branch of our subject, we proceed to consider the White Horses in somewhat of detail.

Now it is a somewhat curious circumstance, that although all the White Horses, except one, are in Wiltshire, that one exception is the great sire and prototype of them all, which is at Uffington, just two and a half miles outside the Wiltshire boundary, and within that of Berkshire. See fig. 1, p. 8. This horse is to be seen from the Great Western Railway near Uffington, on the southern side of the line, but the distance being over two miles, as the crow flies, and the outline being a very narrow one, and still further diminished by foreshortening, it would not be easily found by anyone who did not know exactly where to look for it. Now it is a remarkable fact that none of the mediæval topographers of Berkshire (with the one exception which will presently be noted) mention this horse. But this does not in the least throw doubt upon its existence at the time they wrote; for not only they, but the Saxon and Roman chroniclers as well are equally silent with regard to the great mound known as Silbury Hill, the largest solid earthwork in Europe, which was in-

Fig. 1.

Uffington Horse

dubitably in existence in their time, and close to which all travellers by the western high-road must necessarily have passed. The one mediæval document in which the White Horse is mentioned is a cartulary of the Abbey of Abingdon, which must have been written either in the reign of Henry II. or soon after, and which runs as follows: "It was then customary amongst the English, that any monks who wished might receive money or landed estates, and both use and devolve them according to their pleasure. Hence two monks of the monastery at Abingdon, named Leofric and Godric Cild, appear to have obtained by inheritance manors situated upon the banks of the Thames; one of them, Godric, becoming possessed of Spersholt, near the place commonly known as the White Horse Hill (*locam qui vulgo mons albi equi nuncupatur*), and the other that of Whitchurch, during the time that Aldhelm was Abbot of this place."

This Aldhelm appears to have been Abbot from 1072 to 1084, and from the terms in which the White Horse Hill is mentioned, the name was evidently an old one at that time.

Now it was only two hundred years before this time, viz., in 871, that a very famous victory had been gained by King Alfred over the Danes close to this very spot. "Four days after the battle of Reading," says Asser, "King Æthelred, and Alfred his brother, fought against the whole army of the pagans at Ashdown..... And the flower of the pagan youths were there slain, so that neither before nor since was ever such destruction known since the Saxons first gained Britain by their

arms." And it was in memory of this victory that, we are informed by local tradition, Alfred caused his men, the day after the battle, to cut out the White Horse, the standard of Hengist, on the hill-side just under the castle. The name Hengist or Hengst, itself means *Stone Horse* in the Ancient language of the Saxons, and Bishop Nicholson, in his "English Atlas," goes so far as to suppose the names of Hengist and Horsa to have been not proper at all, but simply emblematical; "even as," says he, "the Emperour of the Germans was called the Eagle, and the King of France the Lilly."

Is this tradition of the memorialization of Alfred's victory by the Uffington Horse a trustworthy one? We do not see why it should not be so. The idea of inscribing human records upon the actual face of nature is one which had occurred to many persons before Alfred. Semiramis is said to have cut a large rock into a likeness of herself, and Hannibal to have made use of a similar material as a tablet for the engraving of an inscription. The question is, however, one which has at various times been debated with considerable vigour by archæologists. Aubrey, in a valuable transcript of his MSS., annotated by Sir R. Hoare, which is preserved in the Museum of the Wilts Archæological Society at Devizes, says, "The White Horse was made by Hengist, who bore one on his arms or standard." Mr. Hughes, however, gave it as his opinion, in a communication to the Newbury Field Club, reported in the *Times* of June 10th, 1871, that "There are other sites within the old Ashdown district

which answer the descriptions of the chroniclers, and have evidently been the scene of battles, and I cannot, therefore, aver positively that the Danes occupied Uffington Castle and the Saxons Barwell and Alfred Camps on the night before this great struggle. Nor am I sure (and this is, perhaps, even greater heresy) that our White Horse was cut out on the hill after the battle. Indeed, I incline to believe that it was there long before, and that Ethelred and Alfred could not have spent an hour on such a work in the crisis of 871." On the other hand, in 1738, Dr. Francis Wise, a Fellow of Trinity College, Oxford, published a letter to Dr. Mead, in which he strongly upholds the affirmative side of the question. To this pamphlet there appeared an answer two years later, entitled, "The Impertinence and Imposture of Modern Antiquaries Displayed, by Philalethes Rusticus," (the Rev. William Asplin, Vicar of Banbury, Oxford. The preface is by a Mr. Bumstead, to whom the pamphlet, which is in letter form, is addressed.) Mr. Asplin says, "Though he has Resemblance enough to be called a Horse as properly as any other quadruped, yet I cannot say He is a Perfect Picture of a Horse. As to his Head, it wants a little repairing. The Rest of His forehead is not so much amiss, especially not at all too short, being from his ears to his withers about fifty of my Paces, *i.e.*, 150 feet. But then he is quite a *light-bodied* one: I may say for a Horse that has lain so long at grass, carries *no body at all*; insomuch that should he take up hill, were I upon the Back of him, I should be under

terrible apprehensions he would slip through his Girth. If his tail is as it was from the beginning, it is a plain case he never carried it well; but just as you have seen a Fox drag his brush when almost down. . . . . This, perhaps, might be helped by Nicking, but that being a modern invention would derogate from his Antiquity, which is all in all."

Again, "It was one of the wise sayings of our ancestors, even our *Saxon Ancestors*, that 'a Good Horse was never of a bad Colour,' and might I be worthy to interpose my private opinion, the horse we are now upon happens to be a *White one* only because his native soil abounds with Chalk or a sort of Limestone. Just as that other Nag of Renown, from whom the Vale of *Red Horse* is denominated, happens to be red only because he is cut in a ruddy soil." This last remark is a hit at a passage in Mr. Wise's letter, in which he quotes a statement from Kranzius, that "Witichind, upon his conversion from the darkness of Paganism, was the first who took the white colt for his device, in allusion to the brightness of Christianity, having till that time used a black one." (This black horse would probably be the "*Pybyr Llai Llwynim*" of Druidical tradition, *i.e.*, 'the horse of the gloom of the grove.') "Which things put me in mind of a certain learned Academick, who, much admiring that his Horse being turned out in the snow should roll in it, was very gravely told it was 'because he had nowhere else to roll.' In a word, whoever will have such sort of Horse must be content with such sort of *Colour* as the country affords, however he may blazon his own

arms. . . . . I may venture to hold him (*i.e.* Dr. Wise) a small Wager, that should the Horse scape a scouring but two seven years more his *Dapple* would become a *Green one*, which would be a still greater Rarity for all true lovers of Antiquity."

To this pamphlet an anonymous answer of no great interest was published in London the following year; and then the matter appears to have been allowed to rest until revived by a letter by Mr. W. J. Thoms to the Society of Antiquaries, in which he expresses his belief that this horse was simply a memorial of the conversion of the Saxons to Christianity, taking the form of one of the White Horses which used formerly to be preserved in their sacred ash-groves (see *Archæologia* xxxi., p. 289).

We have already referred to a cartulary of the Abbey of Abingdon, dating to the reign of Henry II., in which the White Horse is named. In another cartulary of the same Abbey which appears to have been written about the year 1190, or shortly afterwards, the following notice occurs: "Near the hill, where is the ascent to the White Horse, this Church has from ancient days possessed the Lordship of the Manor called Uffington (*manerium Offentun appellatum*), near the village of Sparsholt," &c., &c.

Again in the Wilts Institutions, A.D. 1307, there is a reference to "Compton Sub Album Equum." This would at first sight appear to refer to the Cherhill Horse, which is not far from Compton Basset, and if so would indicate the existence of a far earlier horse in that spot than the one which at present appears. But

Canon Jackson says, in a note upon this entry, that there was "a place (also in Sarum Diocese in 1307) called Compton Beauchamp, or Compton Juxta White Horse, near *Wantage*, which makes it uncertain which Compton is alluded to, Compton Basset or Compton Beauchamp. The patron of Compton Sub Album Equum, in 1307, was Guy Beauchamp. Now Guy Beauchamp certainly had Cherhill Manor in 1307; but he *also* had Compton Beauchamp, near Wantage! So that proves nothing. The Bishops of Sarum were, in 1311 and downwards, the patrons of Compton Basset; and unless it can be shown to the contrary, I should conceive that they were patrons before 1311. So that I rather think that Compton Sub Album Equum, of 1307, was Compton near Wantage." To this, however, we shall have occasion to refer again presently,

In 1323 we again meet with "Compton Juxta *White Horse Manor*" (in the Inquis. post m., p. 306), and in 1348 with "Bishopstone Super Album Equum, Præbendalis" (in the Inst., Wilton). In 1367 appears "*Kingston in le Vale de White Horse*" (Inquis. post m.). And in 1368 or 1369, in the Close Rolls of Edward III., a notice that "*Gerard del'Isle tient en la Vale de White Horse, 1 fee,*" &c.

The above are all the references to the Uffington Horse that we have been able to discover. Leland does not speak of it at all, and all that Camden tells us is to mention the valley, "which" he says, "I wotte not from what shape of a White Horse, imagined to appeare in a whitish chalky hill, they terme '*The Vale of White Horse.*'"

The representation of this horse, given on p. 8, was drawn from a careful survey in May, 1885. A comparison of this figure with one published by Mr. Christopher Edmonds, in 1735, shews that the outlines have undergone very little modification since that time, the almost only difference being that he represents the irregularly shaped head as if the eye and the two lines surrounding it were exactly concentric circles,—a matter in which we strongly suspect the artist to have been in fault. If, therefore, the figure has been so accurately preserved during the last century and a half, we think that it may be assumed that, so far at any rate as the main outline goes, we have still the same figure as was traced by the original makers eight centuries and a half earlier. Now in this outline there is one very remarkable feature, and that is the beaked shape of the head. And here the question arises whether this wonderful head is simply the result of rude iconographic power, or whether there is a meaning in it. A reference to some contemporary British coins will, we think, solve the question. Figs. 3 and 4, p. 16, represent coins of Boduo, the wife of Prassitagus, king of the Iceni (otherwise called Boadicea), and in them will be noticed the same feature, which seems exactly to fulfil the description of the horses of Ceridwen, the Druidical Ceres. These, in several poems of Taliesin, preserved in the Myvyrian Archæology, are spoken of as "Hen-headed Steeds." For that the horse's head is intended to be that of a bird will be clear by comparing it with that figured on a very remarkable (and we believe unique) coin, shown on the same page, fig. 5,

Fig. 2.

Coin of Cunobeline, struck at Colchester. From the collection of the Rev. C. Soames, Rector of Mildenhall, Wilts.

Fig. 3.

Coin of Boduo or Boadicea, Queen of the Iceni. From the British Museum.

Fig. 5.

Coin of Boduo or Boadicea, Queen of the Iceni. From the collection of the Rev. E. H. Goddard, Vicar of Cliffe Pypard, Wilts.

Fig. 5.

Ancient British Coin. From the Collection of the Rev. C. Soames, Rector of Mildenhall, Wilts.

and which must have been of approximately the same date. Ceridwen is herself said by some of the bards to have assumed the form of a White Mare, while in other poems she is spoken of as the "High-crested Hen" (see Hanes' *Taliesin*, ch. 3). It may be added that Mr. Davies, in his *Druidical Mythology* refers to a coin of Boduo, in which he considers that the horse thereon depicted was intended to represent Ceridwen herself.

The Uffington horse measures 355 feet from the nose to the tail, and 120 feet from the ear to the hoof. It faces to sinister, as do also those depicted upon most British coins. The slope of the portion of the hill upon which it is cut is thirty-nine degrees, but the declivity is considerably greater beneath the figure. The exposure is south-west.

The following impromptu poem is given by Philalethes Rusticus, as having been presented to him by "an *Oxford Scholar*" whom the same curiosity led to the spot :—

> "See here the Pad of Good King *Alfry*,
> Sure never was so rare a Palfry!
> Tho' Earth his Dam, his Sire a spade,
> No Painter e'er a finer made.
> Not Wotton on his hunting pieces
> Can shew one such a Tit as this is."

The horse used in former days to be periodically scoured or cleaned, on which occasion the whole population used to turn out and celebrate the event with all sorts of festivities, as is recorded by Mr. Hughes in his "Scouring of the White Horse." A

letter published by Dr. Wise, in 1738, speaks of the custom as an old one; and another pamphlet which appeared two years later, incidentally refers to the scourings as taking place "every seven years." Subsequently to this period, however, the intervals do not seem to have been accurately observed, the years on which scourings took place having been 1755, 1765,* 1766, 1780, 1785, 1790,* 1796,* 1803, 1808, 1813,* 1825, 1838, 1843, and 1857. Since this time little or nothing had been done to it until the year 1884, when it was thoroughly cleaned and re-chalked; without, however, the festivities by which the operation used to be accompanied. The following local ballad is reported to have been composed at one of the annual scourings. We fear that internal evidence prevents our guaranteeing that it was one of very ancient date:—

"The old White Horse wants setting to rights,
And the Squire has promised good cheer;
So we'll give him a scrape to keep him in shape,
And he'll last for many a year.

"He was made a long, long time ago,
With a great deal of labour and pains,
By King Alfred the Great, when he spoiled their conceit,
And caddled † those worsbirds ‡ the Danes.

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* Some little uncertainty exists as to the exact accuracy of these dates.

† Harrassed.

‡ A term of abuse—probably *whore's-bird.*

"The Blowing-stone, * in days gone by,
Was King Alfred's bugle horn,
And the Thorning-tree † you may plainly see,
Which is called King Alfred's thorn.

"There'll be back-sword play and climbing the pole,
And a race for a pig and a cheese;
And we think as he's a dumble ‡ soul
Who do n't care for such sports as these."

Thus much for the Uffington Horse. The next which challenges our attention is that on Bratton Hill, near Westbury, Wilts. And here we again meet with King Alfred and his exploits. "In the same year" (viz., A.D. 878,—seven years subsequently to the battle of Reading and traditional cutting of the Uffington Horse), "after Easter, King Alfred, with a few of his partisans, found a stronghold in a place which is called Æthelingey, and from that stronghold continued indefatigably to wage war against the Pagans, at the head of the noblemen, his vassals, of Somersetshire. And, again, the seventh week after Easter, he rode to the stone Œgbryhta, which is in the eastern part of the forest which is called Selwood, but in Latin, *Silva*

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* A large stone at Kingstone Lisle, near the Foot of the Castle hill, pierced by a channel the shape of a Y turned upside-down. By blowing into the orifice at the top a sound something resembling that of a fog-whistle is produced, which may, on a still day, be heard four or five miles off.

† A thorn tree which stood in the midst of the field of battle at Ashdown in 871. The remembrance of it is still preserved in "Roughthorn Farm."

‡ Dull.

magna in British Coitmaur; and there met him all the inhabitants of Somerset and Wiltshire, and all such inhabitants of Hampshire as had not sailed beyond sea for fear of the Pagans, and upon seeing the King received him as was proper, like one come to life again after so many troubles, and were filled with excessive joy, and there they encamped for one night. At dawn of the following day he advanced his standard to a place which is called Ægclea, where he encamped for one night. At dawn of the following day he came to a place that is called Ethandun, and fiercely warring against the whole army of the Pagans with serried masses, and courageously perserving for a long time, by Divine favour, at last gained the victory, overthrew the Pagans with very great slaughter, and put them to flight, and pursued them with deadly blows, even to their stronghold, and all he found outside of it, men, horses, and sheep, he seized, immediately killed the men, and boldly encamped before the entrance of the Pagan stronghold with all his army."

For fourteen days the siege lasted, after which time the enemy surrendered: and then followed, according to local tradition, the cutting of the White Horse on Bratton Hill, to commemorate the victory; which victory was, as Gough remarks, "much more considerable than the other won by Alfred. In the former he only acted as his brother Ethelred's lieutenant. In this he was not only Commander-in-chief, but King of England: his affairs were in a most critical situation, and the Danes masters of his kingdom."—Gough's *Camden*, p. 146.

But here the question arises as to whether it was really in the neighbourhood of Westbury that this fight took place. There unquestionably exists a local tradition* of a great battle having been fought at some remote period on these downs. And to such tradition a considerable amount of weight would seem to be due, unless, on the one hand, there can be shewn any inherent evidence of its improbability, or that, on the other hand, fresh facts have come to light establishing beyond all reasonable doubt the greater probability of some rival theory.

Now it will be remembered that King Alfred had come to the throne eight years previously, on the death of his brother Ethelred, and that he had for some time been dogged persistently by an evil fate. He had in the first year of his reign been worsted by the Danes in no less than eight or nine encounters, and had eventually been driven to compound with them by a money payment for their departure from Wessex. From this time he seems to have remained quiet, recruiting his forces, until in 875 he felt himself strong enough to resume hostilities. For a long time fortune was still adverse, and at the beginning of 878 we find the Danes encamped in force at Chippenham, and Alfred reduced to flight. Then came the period of his residence at Athelney, during which he was alternately occupied in raising

*The details of the tradition have become somewhat vague by lapse of time. The writer of these pages was informed by one whilom visitor to Bratton that he was accompanied to the camp by a local guide who told him that the battle of Waterloo was fought in that place, and that on this occasion the cart tracts had "run down full of blood!"

troops, and (as a certain time-honoured legend informs us,) toasting cakes, and occasionally letting them burn; until, in May, he determined to make another bold stroke for the kingdom, and, as his faithful chronicler informs us, "rode to the stone Œgbryhta," as aforesaid.

And now comes the difficulty; we have accepted the cakes, but some of our greatest authorities find it difficult to digest the stone, or at any rate to convert it into such good honest historical pabulums as to be able to say where it stood, or perhaps still stands. For a long time it was largely believed that the name of Brixton Deverell indicated its position, Brixton seeming a very probable corruption of "Ecbyrt's stone." But upon this theory a good deal of doubt has been lately thrown, and it is unquestionably true that apparent resemblance is but poor ground upon which to build any philological structure. Furthermore, Canon Jackson, in an article published some years ago in the Archæological Journal, points out that Brixton is in Doomsday called "Brictric's Town," which seems absolutely conclusive as to the origin of that name. He is himself disposed to regard as a more probable site for the Petra Ecbrighti that whereupon stands an ancient stone called in Andrews and Dury's map of Wilts, "Redbridge Stone, on the road from Westbury to Frome.

But where was Ægclea? It has been variously conjectured to have been either Cley Hill, or else Buckley, (now generally spelled Bugley,) which are respectively a mile and a half, and one mile, to the west of Warminster; or, on the other hand, to have been on the

borders of Berkshire, in a place subsequently known as the Hundred of Æcglei, or in the plains of Glastonbury at Edgar-lea, both of which places are some thirty miles distant from the Bratton hill. And it has been suggested as against the claims of the two former sites that they are too near to the place of the encampment of the previous night, which was only some four or five miles off, (as the crow flies,) if we imagine it to have been at Brixton, or a mile further if we take it to have been at the Red-bridge Stone. It has been also pointed out on very high authority that one great secret of King Alfred's success, like that of Napoleon and of many other distinguished generals, lay in the rapidity of his forced marches. There is, no doubt, some force in this objection; still it would not seem to be quite conclusive. It must be remembered that there were no telegraphs or war correspondents in those days to tell generals the exact whereabouts of the opposing armies, and it may not have been until he got to Ecbyrt's Stone that the King found that he had fixed upon a place of rendezvous so very near to the encampment of the enemy upon Bratton hill.

For now comes a very noteworthy part of the history. On the morrow after the encampment at Æcglea, King Alfred "came at dawn," says the Chronicler, "to a place which is called Ethandunan, where fiercely warring against the whole army of the Pagans, he at last gained the victory, overthrew them with very great slaughter, and pursued them even to their stronghold, where he boldly encamped with all his army."

And now we see the importance of this question of the

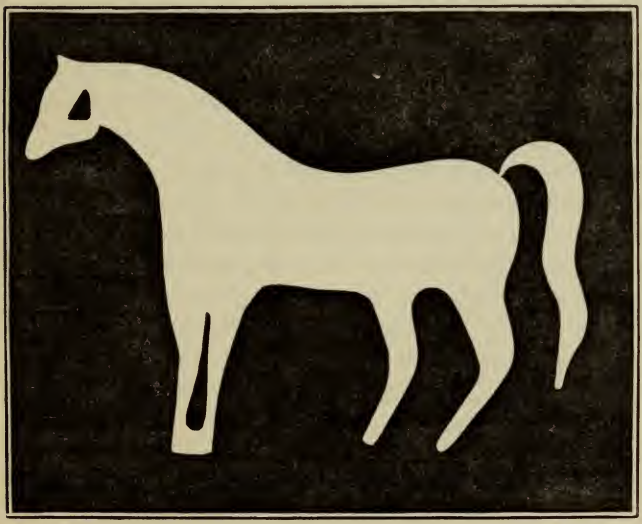
position of Ægclea. If Ægclea be in Berkshire or in Somersetshire, Ethandunan cannot be Edington in Wiltshire, but another place of the same name not far from Hungerford, or yet another on Polden Hill near Bridgwater, or perchance Yattendon near East Ilsley. Now as to this matter we find a great conflict of authority. Camden and Sir R. C. Hoare identify Ethandunum, or as it is otherwise called Ethandun, or Æthandune, or Edderandun, with Edington near Westbury. Milner and others believe it to have been Heddington near Calne. Whitaker and Beke prefer the claims of Yatton down, near Chippenham; while Bishop Clifford would carry both Ægclea, and Ecbyrt's Stone, and Ethandun, as well, down into the fastnesses of Somersetshire; a theory which he first propounded in an able and closely reasoned paper published in 1875, and which has since obtained a very considerable amount of credence and collateral support. If this view be correct, it is quite clear that the Bratton Horse can be no monument of King Alfred's Victory in 878, and its *raison d' étre* would remain still to be sought for.

But however this may be, the old figure—and a very old figure it indubitably was—has itself long since ceased to exist,—ruined by the same unenlightened spirit which has destroyed so many precious historical remains of mediæval architecture, in order to substitute for them a tower, or a roof, or a window, which some wiseacre or other thinks to be more in keeping with the rest of the structure than such as have been gradually added to meet the needs of successive generations.

Fortunately, however, we possess a drawing of the

Fig. 6.

Fig. 7



old horse, made in 1772 by Gough, the editor of *Camden*, of which a copy will be found on p. 25, fig. 6. The dimensions, as given by Gough, are: extreme length, 100 feet; extreme height, nearly as much; from toe to chest, 54 feet. The drawing is evidently in perspective and very much foreshortened.

Now there are in the old horse as thus depicted several very remarkable points. Not the least of these is the crescent-shaped tip given to the tail, which one would, perhaps, have been disposed to regard as accidental were it not that on more than one ancient British coin we meet with something more or less resembling it, and in the case of a coin of Cunobeline, figured in Holland's *Camden*, p. 89, fig. v., we find, together with the horse, a crescent introduced, evidently for some set purpose. Now the crescent is a symbol of Ceridwen, whom we have before mentioned as being represented under the form of a mare, and to whom all horses were, therefore, probably regarded as being more or less sacred. Taliesin, in the poem before quoted, speaks of the "strong horse of the crescent," which is generally supposed by commentators to refer to a son of Ceridwen, by Neivion (*i.e.*, Neptune). It must not, however, be forgotten that in all Teutonic languages the word for *moon* is masculine. Ælius Spartianus, in his life of Caracalla (c. 6 and 7), speaks of the "*lunus deus*," and says that he who considers that the moon should be called by a female name is the slave of women. The word for moon (*mâs*) is also masculine in Sanscrit.

The destruction of the old Westbury Horse and re-

cutting of the new one (fig. 7) was perpetrated in 1778 by a wretch by the name of Gee, who was steward to Lord Abingdon, and who, while employed on a survey of that nobleman's estates in the parish of Westbury, "new-modelled" it, and in so doing changed its whole character; the old one having been, according to Sir R. C. Hoare, "of the cart breed," and the new one "of the blood kind." The latter fact would not seem apparent at first sight. The horse was repaired and the outlines practically recut about the year 1853. The drawing given on p. 25 fig. 7, represents it as it stood in 1870. Since this time there have been some further reparations, and an edging of kerbstones was introduced, only to be torn up in the course of the following summer by the cheerful play of the British tourist. The extreme length from head to tail, both included, is 175 feet; height, from feet to shoulder, 107 feet; circumference of eye, 25 feet.

It will be noticed that the old horse is represented as facing to sinister, whereas the modern one faces to dexter. Now it is scarcely likely that Mr. Gee when recutting the horse would have taken the trouble to turn it round, which would have involved a vast amount of patching and piecing of the turf. A more probable explanation is that the engraver of Mr. Gough's representation transferred his drawing to the wood as it stood, instead of reversing it, and that the figure therefore appears facing the reverse way to what it really did. It must, however, be admitted that, if this be the case, it is somewhat curious that the horse should have been cut facing to dexter, whereas the whole

series of ancient British coins with only a few exceptions (as has been already stated) shew the opposite position. The reason of this is, however, a question which can never now be decided

We come next to the Cherhill Horse (fig. 9. p. 29) and for this, we think, no possible claim to antiquity can be set up. It does, indeed, lie, like each of the other two, in close proximity to a reputed Danish Camp—that of Oldborough—and near the scene of a great battle, which is stated to have taken place here between Egbert, King of the West Saxons, and Ceolwulph, King of the Mercians, in A.D. 821, but there is no record, so far as we are aware, of the existence of any horse anterior to the date at which the present figure was cut; and as it is only about a quarter of a mile from the great London high road, and in full view of that road for several miles, it would seem scarcely possible that there can have been any ancient horse here without some mention of it being to be found. Moreover, there is no local tradition of any earlier horse,—a fact which, in a matter of so recent date, may, perhaps, be held to be conclusive.

This horse then was cut in the year 1780, only two years later than the re-modelling of the Westbury Horse, which very likely suggested it. The maker was one Dr. Christopher Allsop, who was then living in the High Street, Calne, and who had a few years before served the annual office of Guild-steward of that borough. The figure is so cut as to be seen in best proportions from that part of the town which is known as "The Quarry."

Dr. Allsop is reported to have first marked out the

Fig 8.

Fig 9.

outline with small stakes bearing white flags. Then he took his position at a spot exactly on a line between the Downs and Calne, about 200 yards above the top of Labour-in-vain Hill, and from thence, by means of a speaking-trumpet, directed the removal of the stakes one way or the other, until he was satisfied with the result. The turf was then pared off, and the hollow levelled up with chalk obtained by quarrying the downs just over the brow of the hill above. The inner circle of the eye, which is four feet in diameter, is stated to have been filled with glass bottles furnished by Farmer Angell, of Studley. No trace of these now remains, but considering the well-known propensities of English tourists this fact by no means diminishes the credibility of the story.

The point at which Dr. Allsop stood to direct the work was pointed out to the writer of these pages by a very intelligent old man, who was born in the year 1786—only six years after its completion—and he said that he had often heard the whole circumstances of the cutting related by men who had taken part in it.

The principal dimensions of the horse are as follows: extreme length, 129 feet; extreme height, 142 feet; length of barrel, 78 feet; depth of ditto, 41 feet.

The sketch on the opposite page gives the horse in its actual plane projection. The foreshortening arising from the slope of the hill, which is 31 degrees, and also from the fall of the ground to Calne, brings the figure, when viewed from the latter place, to as nearly as possible its true proportion.

The scouring of this horse, which takes place at no fixed interval, but whenever it appears to want it, is done by the Lord of the Manor. The manner of doing it is as follows: a windlass is erected on the top of the hill, immediately over the horse, and from thence chalk is let down in small trucks and spread evenly over the figure. The only disadvantage of this plan is that the first shower of rain that comes on brings down a copious white stream, which extends from the ends of the legs right down to the valley below, and the tracks of the trenches also shew for some time. The result is that until these marks have become obliterated, the horse looks as if he were suspended in a sling and mounted upon stilts 300 feet long! The re-chalking is an operation of some labour and not unattended with risk. In 1876 it occupied three men for a fortnight, and one of the workmen employed was very nearly killed through the giving way of a rope by which a truckfull of chalk was being let down from above. The truck, of course, rushed on with fearful velocity, and the man had barely time to step aside when it dashed past him and buried itself deeply in the ground at the foot of the hill. An elliptical trench was dug some years ago, a short way above the horse, with a view of carrying off the surface drainage. This being perfectly grassed over does not show from a distance, but whether it is of any great use may, perhaps, be subject to question.

The next figure in our cavalcade is that which is seen upon the slope of the hill, to the right of the high road, entering Marlborough from the west. This horse

is 62 feet in length and 47 feet in height, and was cut in 1804 by the pupils of one Mr. Gresley, who kept a school in Marlborough at that time. The designer and architect was William Canning, a son of Mr. Thomas Canning, of the Manor House, Ogbourne St. George. He marked out the figure with wooden pegs, after which the rest of the boys set to work, and in a very short time cleared away the turf and filled up the vacant space with chalk broken to the size of a couple of fists. So long as Mr. Gresley lived and the school was carried on, so long did each succeeding generation of pupils accept the charge of keeping their predecessors' work in order; and the annual scouring of the horse was one of the most honoured traditions of the school. Mr. Gresley, however, died about the year 1830, and the scourings then fell into desuetude and the figure became gradually overgrown with weeds. But in the year 1873, the late Captain Reed, of Marlborough, who was one of the original makers of the horse, undertook to have it repaired, and the outline is now again very fairly defined. The Marlborough Horse is represented as walking, and faces to dexter. The slope of the hill is very moderate, being only about 32 degrees, and this fact having apparently not been taken into consideration by the artists, the outline, when seen from the Bath road (which is the only possible point of view), does not look nearly so well proportioned as it really is.

Eight years after the cutting of this horse, it occurred to one Mr. Robert Pile, who was at that time tenant of the Manor Farm, Alton Barnes, that the valley of Pewsey possessed equal claims to the ownership of a

White Horse as did those of Calne or Marlborough. And accordingly he determined upon the formation of one, and chose for this purpose the southern slope of the hill known as "Old Adam." Being, however, distrustful of his own powers of delineation, he employed a journeyman painter named John Thorne, who was at the time working in the neighbourhood, to carry his wishes into effect. Thorne undertook the job for £20, but after having completed the sketch, and set men to work at the cutting and chalking, he disappeared from the scene, leaving his fellow-helpers to whistle for their share of the reward. The horse, like the rest of the modern figures, faces to dexter, and bears a considerable resemblance to that at Cherhill. It is, however, somewhat larger, being 180 feet in height and 167 feet in length. The point of view from which it was sketched is the place where the Honeystreet road crosses the canal, which is exactly a mile and a quarter off. It is said to be visible from Old Sarum—a distance of about twenty miles as the crow flies. It is kept in fair repair, the cost of scouring it, when required, being defrayed by subscription.

Besides the above-named figures, all of which have more or less of a history attaching to them, there are traces on a good many other Wiltshire hill-sides of the imitative faculty having been exercised, and some leisure hours harmlesly occupied, by attempts at smaller White Horses, most of which, after having been once cut, have been suffered to be again grown over, without any attempt to keep them up. An exception, however, to this rule is the Broad Hinton Horse, which

is in an admirable state of preservation. This figure may be seen upon the downs east of Winterbourne Bassett, on the right-hand side of the road leading from Wootton Bassett to Marlborough, and just within the boundary of the parish of Broad Hinton. It was cut out by Henry Eatwell and Robert Witt, the former of of whom subsequently became parish clerk and the latter landlord of the Crown Inn in the last-named parish. It measures 90 feet square, the extreme length and extreme height being equal. The best point of view is from the Devizes road, when it seems not unlike the Marlborough Horse in outline, but is differenced from that figure by the possession of two ears, whereas the former shows only one. The tail, however, with its very short upstanding dock, more resembles the Cherhill and Alton Horses. It was cut in the year 1838, to commemorate the Queen's coronation.

Two more Horses are known to have been cut in Wiltshire in recent times. The first of these was the work of the shoemakers of Devizes, and was placed by them upon Roundway hill at Whitsuntide, 1848. For many years this was known as the "Snob's Horse," the word *snob* being used in more than one provincial dialect for a shoemaker's journeyman and appearing also in the form of *snab* in Lowland Scotch for an apprentice to that trade. No signs of this figure are however now visible. Another small horse formerly existed upon what is known as "The Slopes," near Pewsey. But of the origin of this figure there is no tradition remaining, so far as the writer has been able to

discover, and the traces of it are now almost, if not entirely, obliterated.

On Roulston Hill, near Northwaite, in Yorkshire, is a White Horse, measuring about 30 feet by 40 feet, and in very good proportion. This is stated to have been cut by a journeyman mason, who had been working in the neighbourhood, as a memento of his stay.

On the Hambledon Hills also, near Thirsk, in the same county, is a White Horse, said to have been cut by a man of the name of Taylor about the year 1857. He was a native of the neighbouring village of Kilburn, who had settled in a distant town, and cut out the horse in the course of a visit to his native place.

Returning again to Wiltshire, we find that at Broadtown, near Wootton Bassett, a horse was cut out as late as 1864 by Mr. William Simmonds, the then occupier of Littleton Farm. Broadtown lies under the range of high land which, beginning from Compton Bassett, stretches right away into Berkshire, and forms the southern boundary of the Vale of White Horse itself. This figure has, therefore, the honour of following—at a long interval, in more senses than one—the original sire and prototype of the whole breed, whose place is at the eastern extremity of this same range of cliff. It measures 86 feet in extreme length by 61 feet in height. These were not, however, intended to be its ultimate proportions, as its maker says that he proposed to "enlarge it by degrees, which was the way that all White Horses were made!" Unhappily for the interests of art, however, Mr. William Simmonds gave

up his farm many years ago, so that the application of his ingenious theory of growth remains still unaccomplished.

We have now come to the end of the White Horses of England; unless, indeed, we are to reckon amongst them a figure which bears some sort of resemblance to a horse upon the higher part of Dartmoor, in Devonshire. It is produced by the baring of the granite, which is here but thinly covered with turf; but whether this has been done intentionally, or whether it has taken place from natural causes, and the resemblance is a mere accidental one, seems very doubtful. No local tradition exists to guide us in the matter, save such as is afforded by the fact of the place being known as "White Horse Hill." And it would seem scarcely likely that if the figure had been the work of human hands its outlines would have become so utterly confused as they have done.

We will only mention, in passing, a figure of George III. on horseback, upon the hills between Preston and Osmington, in Dorsetshire. This was cut out about the beginning of the present century by a soldier whose regiment happened to be quartered near, and was intended to commemorate the stay of the king at the adjoining town of Weymouth. It shows best from the sea, and is in very good proportion. As the quadruped is, however, in this case, a mere addition to the biped, it can scarcely be reckoned amongst the White Horses of England.

Our country possesses, however, a Red Horse of no small fame, situate in the lordship of Tysoe, in Warwick-

shire, and giving its name to the Vale of Red Horse beneath. This is traditionally reported to bave been cut in 1461, in memory of the exploits of Richard, Earl of Warwick; who was for many years one of the most prominent figures in the Wars of the Roses. The Earl had in the early part of the year found himself, with a force of forty thousand men, opposed to Queen Margaret, with sixty thousand, at a place called Towton, near Tadcaster. Overborne by numbers, the battle was going against him, when, dismounting from his horse, he plunged his sword up to the hilt in the animal's side, crying aloud that he would henceforth fight shoulder to shoulder with his men. Thereupon the soldiers, animated by their leader's example, rushed forward with such impetuosity that the enemy gave way and flew precipitately. No less than twenty-eight thousand Lancastrians are said to have fallen in this battle and in the pursuit which followed, for the commands of Prince Edward were to give no quarter. It was to his victory that the latter owed his elevation to the throne which took place immediately afterwards.

The Red Horse used to be scoured every year upon Palm Sunday, at the expense of certain neighbouring landowners who held their land by that tenure, and the scouring is said to have been as largely attended, and to have been the occasion of as great festivity, as that of the older horse in the adjoining county of Berks. The figure is about 54 feet in extreme length, by about 31 in extreme height.

In Ireland there are, so far as we are aware, no turf-horses whatever, and in Scotland only one, that of

Mormond, in the County of Aberdeen. Mormond is a conical hill, in the north-eastern corner of the county, and from the flatness of the surrounding country forms a conspicuous object whether viewed from the land or the sea. The horse, which covers about half-an-acre of ground, was cut out in the early part of the last century by the laird of the village of Strichen, and was intended as a memorial of a favourite riding-horse of his own. It is said that he got so interested in the progress of the work as to have died of grief at not being able to get it to appear in good proportion from all points of view! The figure was cut in the turf and the outline filled up with white quartz quarried close by.

Of Turf-Monuments other than horses the best known is probably the Giant, on Trendle Hill near Cerne Abbas, in Dorsetshire. (Fig. 10, p. 39). This is a figure roughly representing a man, undraped, and with a club in his right hand; the height is 180 feet, and the outlines are marked out by a trench two feet wide, and of about the same depth. It covers nearly an acre of ground. Hutchins imagines this figure to represent the Saxon God, Heil, and places its date as anterior to A.D. 600. Heil certainly appears to have been a popular deity in this neighbourhood, for Camden speaks of St. Augustine as building Cerne Abbey to commemorate his having "broken there in pieces Heil, the idol of the heathen English-Saxons, and chased away the fog of paganish superstition." (*Britannia* 212 B.) Stukeley calls the figure "A memorial of the Phœnician Hercules, or Melicartus." The former of these conjectures seems not improbable, as Helios

Fig. 10.

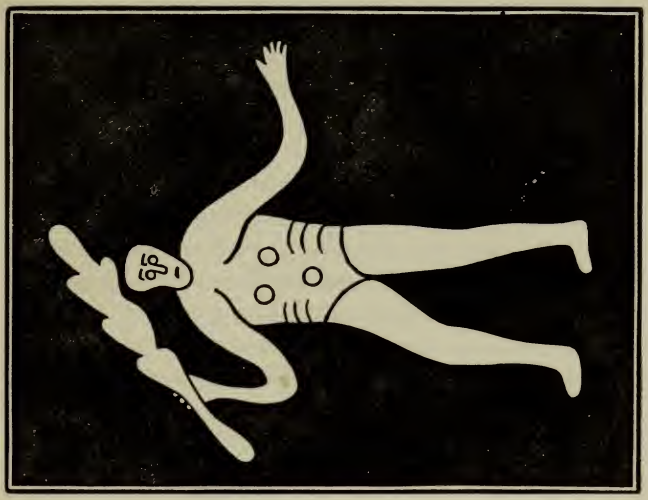


Fig. 11.

(whom Nonnus, in his *Dionysiaca*, tells to us have been the same as Hercules) was a great object of the adoration of the Phœnicians; and that this people visited the southern coast of Britain is almost certain. What, however, "Melicartus" (Melicertus?) can have done in Dorsetshire does not appear to be so clear. The account of the Gallic Hercules, given by Lucian, is that he "had a club in his right hand and a bow in his left" (See the *Præfatio*.) Britton, on the other hand, tells us that "Vulgar tradition makes this figure commemorate the destruction of a giant, who, having feasted on some sheep in Blackmoor, and laid himself to sleep on this hill, was pinioned down, like another Gulliver, and killed by the enraged peasants, who immediately traced his dimensions for the information of posterity." There were formerly discernable some markings between the legs of the figure, rather above the level of the ankles, which the country-folk took for the numerals 748 and imagined to indicate the date! We need, perhaps, scarcely remark that Arabic numerals were unknown in Europe until at least six centuries later than this period.

For many years the Cerne Giant stood alone in Great Britain; but within quite a recent period a brother of his has been brought to light at Wilmington, in Sussex. (Fig. 11, p. 39.) This figure had long been known to the neighbouring rustics by the name of the Long Man, and appears to have been carved upon the chalk on Winddoor Hill. It had, however, become entirely grown over with grass, and was, consequently, only visible under certain atmospheric conditions, viz.,

on bright sunny mornings in the summer, and during frosty weather in the winter time. At these periods the different hue of the grass caused the outline to be distinctly traceable from the village of Wilmington, which is about half a mile off; but on a nearer approach it entirely disappeared. The height of the figure is 240 feet; extreme width from hand to hand 148 feet. The outline was in 1874 rendered more permanent and more easily discernable by the insertion of white bricks, at the expense of the Duke of Devonshire, who owns the land upon which the figure stands. Dr. Phené, who first called attention to it in 1873, imagines it to represent Andreas, the embodiment of the powers of Nature; and he points out the curious fact that "it is close to the neighbourhood of Cæsar's landing place and if fenced round would form an arena exactly answering to the ancient British deity of sacrifice, mentioned by both Cæsar and Strabo, and in which it is supposed human victims were enclosed and burnt." The words of Cæsar are as follows:—"They have images of enormous size, whose bodies, made of woven osiers, they fill with living men *(simulacra, quorum contexta viminibus membra vivis hominibus complent)*, and these being set on fire, the victims perish in the surrounding flames." B. VI., Ch. 15. The account of Strabo is much the same; only he says that it was of hay or straw that the image was constructed *(cataskeuasantes colosson chortou)*. Here, then, the question arises whether the theory to which Dr. Phené appears to point, that these "images" were simple spaces marked out by a sort of paling within which the victims were

confined, is a permissible explanation of the passage. It must be admitted, on the one hand, that the two different modes of making an enclosure, which according to this hypothesis the Latin and Greek authors would respectively indicate, may still be seen in use in the Country. The fence of woven twigs is, of course, the more common of the two; but it is by no means unknown for a quantity of straw to be built up into a winter fold for sheep, to afford them a temporary protection, until such time as the straw is wanted for other purposes. On the other hand there appears to be no adducible example of the use of the word "colossus" in any other sense than that of a statue; while the idea of a large image, to which, and in which, human victims were sacrificed, is one of the most familiar in the rites of heathen nations. Archbishop Thomson, in his *Bampton Lectures*, speaks of the statue of Chronos, at Carthage, "in a bending posture, with hands stretched out and raised upwards. It was heated till it glowed; into its arms were placed the children destined for sacrifice; they fell into the gulf of fire beneath." (Cf. Leviticus xviii. 21 and 2 Kings xxiii. 10; also Milton's *Paradise Lost*, I. 392-6.) Hesus, we may add, is mentioned by Lactantius, B. I. Ch. 21, as one of the Gods to whom human sacrifices were offered, and the same thing is also said by Lucan, *Pharsalia*, I. 444-6. Of the somewhat unmeaning sticks in the hands of the Wilmington Giant, one may very possibly have been originally a club, and the other a bow. The bulges at the top of the right-hand stick look very much like the commencement of a club, while the production of the line at the bottom may have been due in the first

instance to a line of chalk carried down by the rain, suggesting to some restorers of the figure that it was a stick similar to that in the other hand. If this suggestion were correct, the description of Lucian above quoted would apply with absolute exactitude.

We represent this figure as entirely white, and not merely in outline, for the sake of comparison; though there is, indeed, considerable ground for believing that such was in point of fact its original condition.

The last Turf-Monument that we shall take occasion to mention is the Cross cut upon the chalk hill, at Whiteleaf, in Buckinghamshire. (Fig. 8. p 29.) This is a right-angled figure, standing upon a triangular base. The height is 230 feet, of which the cross itself takes up 55 feet; width of base 340 feet. Mr. Francis Wise, in his *Observations on the Antiquities of Berkshire*, supposes it to be a memorial of some victory of the Saxons or the Danes, and imagines that the name of the neighbouring village of Bledlow is derived from Blodlaw, the bloody hill. He adds that it is a memorial analogous to the White Horse, but of later date, when the heathen device upon the banner of the Saxons had been exchanged for a christian one after their conversion to Christianity. Mr. Wise quotes the Saxon Chronicle as relating a predatory excursion of the Danes into Buckinghamshire, between Aylesbury and Bernwood Forest, in A.D. 921, where he conjectures that the battle which led to the erection of the trophy was fought under the banner of King Edward, the son and successor of Alfred.

Lipscombe, in his History of Buckinghamshire, takes

quite a different view. He points out that the parish of Risborough, in which the Cross is situated, belonged at the time of Domesday Book to Archbishop Lanfranc, and was held at the conquest by Algar Stalre, standard-bearer of Christ Church, Canterbury. And he thinks that if the ancestors of Stalre held Risborough under the monks of Canterbury at an earlier period, and exercised his office, the setting up the standard of Christianity immediately after the conversion of the Britons to that faith must appear appropriate. He adds that the cross being the armorial bearing of the Church and Priory, might have been a memorial of the property acquired here by the monastery.

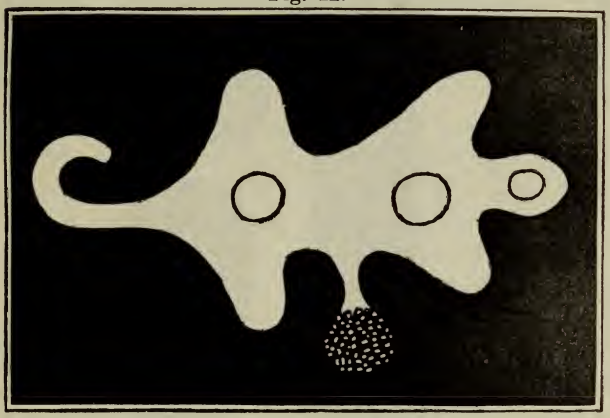
Another local authority, the Rev. A. Baker, in a paper in Vol. I of the Records of Buckinghamshire, speaks of the existence of "a second cross, traditionally coeval, incised on a still more prominent hill in the parish of Bledlow." This he describes as "of the Greek form, with four equal limbs, each 30 feet by 15 feet. No base. Near the brow of the hill. Now overgrown with weeds." And, he adds, "may this not have been the original memorial, and have suggested the position of the other, as on a more conspicuous spot, where it would have served the further purpose of a wayside cross, the monks being the authors of this monument? A right of sanctuary, or demarcation of Church lands, may have been included in the intention."

The Earl of Buckinghamshire holds the ground around the cross upon condition of keeping it as common land, and the Cross in order.

We have now come to the end of the Turf-Monuments

of this country. We are unaware of the existence of any similar memorials in any other of the countries of Europe, indeed of the world. The well-known American Animal Mounds, however, may be said to bear a certain part of analogy to our various incised figures, though not a very close one, and we think that it may add to the interest of these pages if we append a few of the typical forms of those curious structures. They are of considerable number, and exist chiefly, (though by no

Fig. 12.



means exclusively,) in the States of Wisconsin and Ohio. They vary in height above the soil, from 2 feet to 6 feet, and the largest of them is stated to be 300 feet in length. The objects represented are not only alligators, buffaloes, beavers, &c., but also men, birds, and other figures, one of which looks exactly like a barbed arrow-head. Mr. Lapham, to whose work on the Antiquities of Wisconsin we are indebted for the outlines of fig. 12 and 13, does

not doubt but that they were all constructed by the Indians, and were of the character of totems. Dr. Phené, however, who has carefully investigated the subject, is

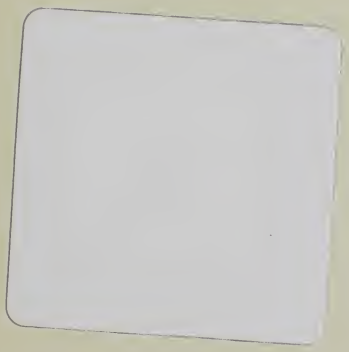
Fig. 13

of opinion that some of them were meant to represent deities, while others were sepulchral, and some again, intended as landmarks. The alligator mound (Fig. 12)

Fig. 14.

measures 250 feet by 12 feet, not including the heap of calcined stones projecting from the body. The beaver mound (Fig. 13) 140 feet by 45 feet. And the buffalo mound (Fig. 14) 108 feet by 52 feet. We may add that these mounds are represented as white upon black in our woodcuts, for clearness' sake, but that it is not intended to convey thereby the idea that they are differentiated in point of colour from the surrounding surface in the way that our White Horses are, this not being, so far as we are aware, the case at present, whatever it may have been when they were at first constructed.

A. HEATH, PRINTER, CALNE.



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